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# Preparing Your Personal Shrine and Your ESP Laboratory

by Robert and Earlyne Chaney



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# Preparing Your Personal Shrine and Your ESP Laboratory

## THE SHRINE

"Exactly what is a shrine, and why should I have one," is a question to which the answer unfortunately seems obvious because we are too apt to consider only its traditional meaning. The very nature of the question will cause many to dismiss it and lose the benefits which it offers.

In the traditional sense, Webster tells us that a shrine is *...an object as an altar, temple or chapel or a spot or place considered sacred because of its relation to some holy person or miraculous event or because of its character and historical associations.*

In the Astarian sense, a shrine is a personal altar, a place where the Astarian meets his real Self, and through that Self meets God. It may be also a place where he develops his higher than physical faculties, a place of temporary withdrawal from the physical world to hold communion with the spiritual world, a place of tranquility in which the Astarian gathers the Infinite resources and makes them his own.

We are specially concerned with that portion of Webster's definition which states *...a spot or place considered sacred ...because of its character and historical associations.*

Thus for the Astarian a shrine might be entirely within himself and have no outer location whatever. Or it might be a special place, a room, a corner of a room, or simply a chair which he holds hallowed because



of the spiritual activities in which it is involved. It is a place where he practices meditation and spiritual attunement, where he practices such interior disciplines as Lama Yoga.

Although we state emphatically that the practice of Lama Yoga is by no means compulsory for the Astarian, we present it for those who long to reach Godward through meditation and yoga, as well as through study and service. Such a disciple will find the forthcoming suggestions extremely helpful in establishing a proper setting and background in his home.

The long history of man's spiritual evolution, altar upon altar, reaching finally to the highest spiritual status, indicates that proper use of an outer physical place gives added impetus to his spiritual aspirations. It helps provide the atmosphere in which the psyche best expresses the Godly aspects of its character.

Therefore, if possible, you may wish to arrange a place to which to retire for your time of daily or weekly meditations, prayers, yogic practices, etc.

You may be fortunate enough to have a spare room which can be converted into a shrine. Or you may have only a corner in some well-used room, or a ventilated closet, an attic, a corner in a basement. Possessing none of these, you may set aside only a certain chair, a stool or bench, and there, without ceremony of any kind, enter your spiritual attunement.

Often you may find yourself in the midst of busy activities with little time for meditation, and no time at all for ceremony. It is not important how or where it is practiced...it is only important that it is performed, in solitude and sincerity, with enthusiasm and intensity.

Should there be an entire room which may be utilized as a shrine, we shall now attempt to help you create the proper spiritual atmosphere through its physical furnishings. In doing so we may occasionally refer to our own early efforts toward yoga, and in establishing our own shrine, so that we may be of more personal help.

If you have a choice of colors, let them be white, beige, blue, purple or gold. Second choice would be yellow, orange, green. If you find it necessary to use objects and furnishings of colors other than those



listed (because you already possess objects of different colors and prefer not to accumulate others), then by all means do so. If possible, avoid using red or black, however.

Even though you may prefer to sit in a chair to practice your yoga, rather than use a floor cushion, still you should have a floor pad. Some of Astara's Lessons contain exercises which are made easier by using a floor pad.

This pad may be an old quilt, an old blanket if thick enough, perhaps an old quilted bed or table pad. Or perhaps you will wish to purchase a regular exercise pad. It should be fairly thick, for it must protect your body from the floor. It should be large enough for you to perform lying-down exercises upon it. The suggestion of the pad does not apply solely to those who have a Shrine Room. It applies to all, for it can be rolled and put away after use.

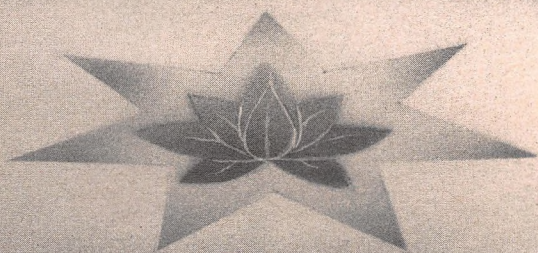
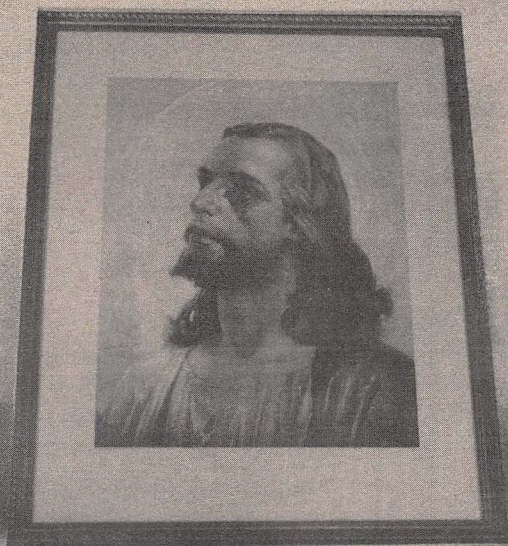
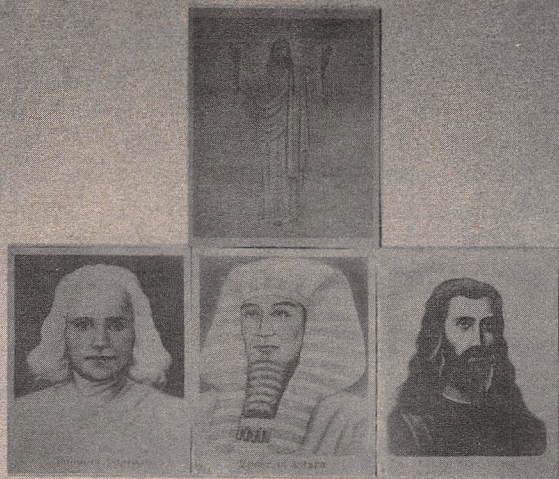
The walls of your Shrine can be enhanced with pictures of those who are a source of inspiration to you, or scenes which inspire. We most strongly urge you to select your favorite picture of the Master Jesus for a prominent location, if such a portrait would inspire you. Astara offers an excellent picture of the Master Jesus as *The Healing Christ*, and pictures of enlightened new age Teachers: Rama, Zoser, and Kut-Hu-Mi. You may prefer a likeness of Lord Buddha, Moses, or any of the saints of other religions, which Astara cannot supply.

Include whatever furnishings you desire so long as they are conducive to soothing harmony, mental serenity, and offer aid to "stirring up" spiritual aspiration. There are only a few requisites. One is that you must have a table of average height. Make it as large or as small as you wish. If you sit upon the floor in the cross-legged lotus posture, then your table should be low on the floor before you. You can simply shorten the legs.

This table becomes your personal shrine or altar. You will sit before it to perform your Lama Yoga and any other meditations. It may be as simple or elaborate as suits your personal desires. We offer only suggestions.

There should be an incense burner if you are inspired by the aroma of incense. There should be a candle on either side of the table. There should be a





## The Shrine



picture of the Master Teacher who is the source of greatest inspiration to you. There could be a vase of flowers, if it pleases you.

There are several objects which are not "standard equipment," but which you may wish to obtain for certain special exercises. One is a crystal ball for, lowly in reputation though it may be, it is still one of the most excellent of all sources to unfold clairvoyance. (See Astara's Lesson *Clairvoyance -- The Sense of Psychic Sight*.) They are quite expensive and you may prefer to purchase a large round glass flower vase. Fill it with water and use it as a focal point of concentration to unfold the inner sight.

Another article to be used only occasionally is a mirror. It should be placed so that you look directly into it when seated before the altar. You may wish to arrange the mirror permanently in this position, but it is not necessary. It is to be employed only for certain special exercises presented in the Clairvoyance Lesson and Astara's Degree Lessons.

The only other requisite in furnishings is a bench, stool, or straight chair upon which to sit for your meditations, if you do not employ the lotus posture. Also you may wish an easy chair for some meditations and for study, or for the practice of astral projection which requires complete physical relaxation.

It seems superfluous to state that there should never be smoking or drinking or harsh words spoken in this spiritual retreat. If you desire to create of it a real Holy of Holies, and wish to establish a spiritual etheric tie between your shrine and the earthly temple of Astara, refer to our Dedication Ceremony for the Holy Shrine, in the latter part of this Lesson.

Remember we have told you that the Dawn Star, Astraea, projects a perpetual ray of spiritual power upon the earthly Astarian temple. If you desire to connect your own shrine to that ray of spiritual power through earthly Astara, the performance of this mystical ceremony will accomplish this purpose. It is similar to the dedication ceremony conducted here at headquarters when the temple of Astara was first opened.

#### DESCRIBING A SHRINE ROOM

We think it would be good to describe a particular Shrine Room for you so that you may have some idea



of how to proceed. Also to point out that your Shrine Room can be as simple or as elaborate as you desire.

The most beautiful Shrine Room we have ever seen was decorated in off-white and cream and gold. This particular couple whom we shall call Mary and John, began with nothing more than a bare room and from that they slowly developed their Shrine. They wanted our advice as to color before beginning to furnish the room and we suggested those already listed.

Before describing Mary and John's Shrine, we must offer a very important point. Not everyone is of the same temperament as they. Some prefer utter simplicity in their spiritual atmosphere and would not be at all inspired by the profusion of objects with which they adorned their holy place. If you are such a one, then by all means do not feel that you are negligent even if you do not have any of the described objects in your Shrine.

Remember that you are a distinct individual and must approach your place of association with the spiritual and eternal in an atmosphere that is inspiring to you. If a multiplicity of objects offers the psychological burden of confusion or disorganized focus of mental attention, then by all means let your Shrine retain the atmosphere of simplicity, for simplicity itself, to many people, is inspiring and conducive to spiritual attainment. Adorn your Shrine with objects of spiritual meaning only to the degree that inspires you.

Having very little money to invest in their project, Mary and John began by hanging drapes made of white bed sheets. They had a floor pad and a vanity stool, and that was all. The floor pad was for Mary, who preferred the lotus posture. But John preferred a stool for his meditations.

Some time later they purchased a beige cotton carpet. Then Mary found an old "library" table and painted it with cream enamel. This was their altar table. Sometimes she used a covering, sometimes not. Her first covering was made from a yellow bed sheet -- yellow being as close as she could come to gold. Later she bought cream sateen; in the center of it she sewed a gold seven-pointed star with a purple lotus in its heart, and bordered it with gold fringe. She draped this exquisite covering clear to the floor. But this last was simply satisfying a whim of hers and was by no means a necessity.



Mary later replaced the sheet drapes with those of monks' cloth which were quite inexpensive, but which added much warmth to the room.

John then complained that the vanity stool became uncomfortable after an extended period of meditation. Mary searched furniture stores for just the right type of stool. She found a hassock with no legs, no back. It was covered with a soft shag fabric. It was most attractive but such a one is not at all a necessity. Placing a cushion on your vanity stool or bench can be just as satisfactory.

You may prefer a straight-backed chair. If so, do not lean against the back of the chair during the breathing exercises of Lama Yoga. Always hold the spine straight and free during the breathings. You may lean against it for the meditations which follow, or even leave your bench for a more comfortable chair, if you find meditation difficult otherwise.

Upon their altar Mary and John had a picture of Astara's Healing Christ in an elaborate gold frame which was their focal point of meditation. They also had pictures of Rama, Kut-Hu-Mi and Zoser, and one of Robert and me together, all in simple gold frames -- although in the beginning the pictures had no frames at all. They were simply leaned against the wall during meditation.

The candlesticks were gold color as was their incense burner, although Mary said they began with glass candlesticks, and no incense burner for quite a long time. Nothing expensive is necessary, for candlesticks may be of glass, wood, ceramic or metal. White candles about six or eight inches tall should be used at all times. Scattered about upon the altar were several spiritual artifacts and objects...beautiful stones. Some were Mary's, some were John's. These items were also used as objects of concentration.

Mary purchased an exercise pad. She felt this one item was an absolute necessity. When the weather was cold she spread a wool afghan over it during her meditations.

In each corner of the room were little pedestals which John made from wooden boxes. Mary painted them with cream enamel. Later she made coverings of beige colored sheets with gold fringe which draped to the floor -- not expensive but strikingly beautiful. Although the pedestals and their coverings were inexpen-



sive, the statues and items which reposed upon them were quite magnificent. There was a statue on each. One was of the Master Jesus, another of Buddha in the lotus posture, one of an ancient Master from India. The fourth was an Egyptian seated upon a throne. Since they were unsure of his true identity, they called him Zoser.

Surrounding each figure were symbols from the religion each represented or at least from some spiritual Mystery. On the pedestal with the Christ was a beautiful carved cross, not a crucifix. With the Buddha was a tiny prayer wheel. With the Indian was a jade talisman and an incense burner, and with the Egyptian was a green scarab. These statues and special objects had required much searching. Mary and John enjoyed visiting quaint oriental and antique shops in search of this type of unusual item. Indeed, this became their favorite pastime and hobby.

The walls which once had been quite bare were now lined with pictures and sketches of ancient philosophers. There was one of Plato...an unusual sketch of Apollonius of Tyana. There was one of Moses, very striking. There was a mystical drawing depicting creation. Its colorful swirling vortices and shooting stars made it a beautiful addition to the room.

In one special grouping were reminders of Egypt. There was a picture of the Great Pyramid, the Sphinx, Zoser's Step Pyramid, the head of Egypt's most glorious queen, Nefertiti, and an artist's depiction of the ancient Mystery School in Heliopolis, the City of the Sun.

Additional suggestions which you might use include Indian relics -- old beads, arrowheads, ancient mixing bowls. Artifacts from Peru, Yucatan, India, China. Mayan and Aztec are also striking.

Mary and John's Shrine was one of supreme enchantment. It ranged from simple, inexpensive homemade items to those of extreme value. But remember, they began with nothing but a floor pad and a stool. They made their Shrine Room their hobby, and saved and planned for it. It required years of time to build it into the room we have described. Every year at Christmas and at birthdays they gave each other items for the Shrine Room. We have described it in order to point out that much can be done for so little, and the actual furnishings can be very simple.

The items upon the altar can be as inexpensive or



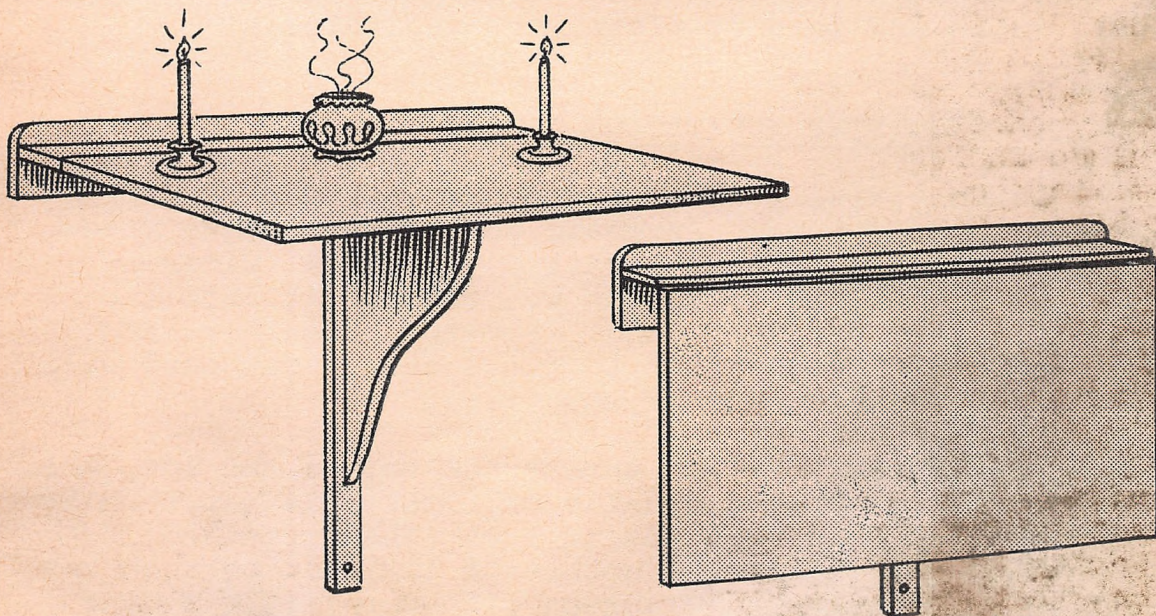
as elaborate as you choose. Thus the basic requisites of your Shrine Room sum up as follows:

1. Quiet, spiritual colors.
2. Floor pad.
3. Straight chair, bench or stool.
4. Altar with Master's picture. (Select the Master who is the source of your greatest inspiration.)

You may add to or take away from this list as it suits your desires. Actually you do not even need an altar. Only a chair or floor pad and the Master's picture. We feel the Master's picture is an absolute necessity.

#### THE SHRINE SHELF

There are many disciples who have no special room but who will wish to create an Altar Shrine. This may be accomplished by fastening a shelf to a wall, to be lowered or raised as you desire. A suggested size would be from 24 to 30 inches in length and about 12 inches deep. It should be the height of an ordinary



THE SHRINE SHELF



reading or dining table, approximately 30 inches from the floor.

Occasionally it should be covered with a cloth, and you should have both a white and a dark cloth. There are various exercises given in the *Adventures in ESP* series and in the Degree Lessons, which require a white cloth and others dark. This applies to the altar in the Shrine Room as well. You need not practice all exercises given unless you wish to do so. They are presented for those who wish to experiment. You should have candles at each end of the shelf and the picture of a Master.

If it is possible, you may wish to leave the shelf raised and undisturbed, covering it with a top spread to conceal the articles on it from curious eyes. On the other hand, visitors may benefit by discovering that you are a mystic. Further, it may give you opportunities to speak of Astara to others.

#### THE TABLE SHRINE

You may have a table which you can convert into an altar. It should be treated as you would your Room or Altar Shrine. You may wish to clear away your mystical items after your meditations or you may wish to make a permanent shrine upon the table. If your home life makes it impossible for you to have a permanent table altar, perhaps you will want to purchase an ordinary card table and fold it after your meditations.

#### CONSTRUCTING YOUR MEDITATION CLOSET

You may wish to create your shrine in a favorite corner in your home. Purchase some heavy opaque material, such as sateen, at least a yard wide, wider if possible, and long enough so you can cut it into two lengths about six feet long. Sew them together and hem one end through which to run a cord. The cord will project on either side of the drape.

Extend your curtain across the corner and loop the ends of the cord around nails or hooks. It can then be easily taken down when not in use. The drape should reach the floor but need not reach the ceiling. It requires only a moment to screen off your little Prayer Closet. Even though you may be alone for meditations, closeting yourself in a small area may be much more beneficial for your particular meditations.



If for any reason you cannot or do not wish to indulge in the practice of Lama Yoga, then sit in your meditation corner and just quietly relax and wait, keeping yourself calm and contemplative. You need not actively engage in any program of meditation or mantrums if you do not wish. Simply adopt a prayerful attitude and wait quietly for any blessing. You may simply wish to express your thanks to God for any previous blessings.

After sitting quietly as long as possible without becoming restless, then say the Astarian affirmation and conclude your sitting. It may seem pointless, this relaxed sitting in the dark, waiting, but it most assuredly is not. Those of the inner planes are well aware of your quiet times, and a build-up of power behind your curtain...even though you are not actively engaged in ritual...can result in surprising benefits to you.

If you need a point of concentration, simply turn your attention to the curtain. Do not strain or stare. It is well to make your entire room as dark as possible. Indulging in these periods of blessed quietness will unfold peace and poise within you and will develop a surprising sensitivity to psychic things. It will train you to "listen to the soft footfall of God."

Such a period of restful waiting and listening will often calm the stirrings of anxiety which may be disturbing within and, as the rippled surface of a pool of water eventually becomes stilled, so will your mind.

#### THE SHRINE WITHIN THE HEART

Never forget this: Although an actual outer shrine is desirable, none is necessary, for it must ever remain secondary to the eternal shrine within the heart. We know one disciple who, having no extra room and no accommodating corner, cleared away a corner in the basement of his home and has only one item in his basement shrine...his floor pad. This removes him from the midst of family activities and gives him the desired seclusion.

He says his Shrine is in his heart and that he needs nothing tangible to aid him in seeking that inner kingdom. There are many who will share this sentiment for they harmonize with a certain ray which does not require ceremony of any type to stir the soul. In fact, to many of these particular disciples ritual or



ceremony of any kind is quite tiresome.

Perhaps the busyness of your every day prohibits your preparing any type of shrine. Well, then, don't ...and don't allow it to disturb you. Perhaps you must rush so that you find it possible only for a brief turning within, in morning or evening. If so, then make no problem of it. Simply find any chair and seek the silence and the Father within, if only for a brief contact. Or toss your floor mat down for your five-minute meditation without worrying about an altar. Or sit on any rug.

Perhaps you can give only one evening a week to actual deep meditation, preparing your altar for that occasion, and for that period only. If so, still try to find that daily moment of stillness and contact with the Father. Even if it must be "on-the-run" it is better than no daily contact at all.

It may be that those with whom you share your home would interfere with elaborate preparations. If so, then sit anywhere for ten minutes of Lama Yoga each morning before beginning your daily round. That regular brief attunement can add indescribable tranquility to your daily life.

You may wish no prop of any kind...only the inner shrine. Remember this: to each his own. What may open new worlds for you may be only a source of tedious nuisance for another. Circumstances differ with each individual and it remains for each to seek his own method of attainment and attunement. This Lesson only points the way and offers suggestions to the many who have written asking our help in creating some type of shrine or altar for home worship.





## Dedication Ceremony for the Holy Shrine

*A consecration ritual to be performed by the individual Astarian in dedicating a room or portion thereof as a Holy Shrine or spiritual center in the home.*

### OUTWARD PREPARATION

Simple or elaborate as you may prefer, arrange all the items that are to be a part of your shrine. These may or may not include the various articles described earlier in the Lesson.

For the Dedication Ceremony you will need a white candle and a flower (preferably red) to be used in the ritual. The white candle symbolizes the spiritual plane, its residents and powers. The red flower symbolizes the purified physical life energies.

Light the candle, place the flower alongside or in front of it, and begin your

### INNER PREPARATION

Become completely calmed. Let any concern or problem be released from your consciousness. Let nothing but peace be present...a sense of harmony with all the world about you and with the inner planes, the unseen spheres of life.

If you wish, listen to meditation music a few moments to help establish inner tranquility. (Astara's recordings, *Melodies for Meditation*, *Melodies for Inspiration* and *Meditations Along the Inner Way* are especially suited for this purpose.) Or perhaps you would prefer reading a favorite poem, Scripture, or other inspirational literature. You may wish to do both.

Next use your power of imagination to create the vision of Astral Astara as though it were present in



ASTRAL ASTRA





space directly over your Shrine. Imagine a close, sacred vibratory contact between Astral Astara and your Shrine.

Mentally see streams of White Light flowing from Astral Astara and surrounding and permeating your Shrine. See the Shrine filled with these streams as though it is being bathed in purity. See every earthly condition being swept away and the Holy White Light saturating every inch of space in your Shrine, whether it be an entire room, a corner, or merely a table.

When you inwardly sense the close association with Astral Astara that is thus established, you are ready to begin the dedication.

#### THE CEREMONY OF DEDICATION

(Speak aloud the words that follow, pausing a few moments where indicated by the asterisks.)

*I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go unto the house of the Lord.*

*The Lord is in His holy temple: let  
all the earth keep silence before Him.*

\* \* \* \* \*

For the everlasting service of God and His children, both in the world of spirit and on this earth plane of life, I present this Shrine for dedication.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here at the altar of my heart I have lighted a taper of prayer, O God, a candle whose small ascending light symbolizes my heart's desires. May its pure flame consume all dross. Though many tapers are aglow in many temples, O Father, disdain not to discern, among so many, this small flame.

\* \* \* \* \*

Let the power of spirit touch upon it and this flower (then name each individual object present in the Shrine: pictures, incense burner, altar cloth, etc.) and let these objects be endowed with the magnetic properties which will hallow them forevermore.

\* \* \* \* \*



As this flower exudes purified physical essence,  
so may the atmosphere of this Shrine be charged with  
the vibratory essences emanating from the spiritual  
focal points of the inner planes.

\* \* \* \* \*

*AMEN and AMEN*

\* \* \* \* \*

As this candle diffuses its light into the sur-  
rounding elements, so may the power of spirit be dif-  
fused through this Shrine, and through myself person-  
ally into all the world. May this Shrine be now and  
forevermore a focal point of Light and Truth.

\* \* \* \* \*

*OM MANI PADME HUM*

\* \* \* \* \*

Thou, Whose Unmeasured Temple stands,  
Built over earth and sea,  
Accept the Shrine that human hands  
Have raised, O God, to Thee.

Lord, from Thine inmost glory send  
Within this Shrine to bide,  
The peace that dwelleth without end  
Serenely by Thy side.

May erring minds that worship here  
Be taught the better way;  
And they who mourn, and they who fear,  
Be strengthened as they pray.

While in this hallowed Shrine the storm  
Of earthborn passion dies,  
May faith grow firm, and love grow warm,  
And pure devotion rise.

Thou, Whose Unmeasured Temple stands,  
Built over earth and sea,  
Accept this Shrine that human hands  
Have raised, O God, to Thee.

May the pure White Light of the Christ be centered  
in this Shrine. Nothing but good can enter it. Nothing  
but good shall emanate from it. A-men.



\* \* \* \* \*

Upon this sanctified Place of Light I now request the blessing of my Master Teacher and other loved ones who reside in the higher planes. So mote it be.

\* \* \* \* \*

Henceforth this is the shrine of spirit, of truth, of Light. Help me, Illumined Ones of the greater realms, to walk uprightly as a steward of the Mysteries and a son of Light. Help me so to live that all who witness the works of this shrine, whether of the physical plane or the spiritual planes, may know that I walk with God into the glorious dawn of the new age. A-men. So mote it be.

\* \* \* \* \*

### CONCLUSION

Extinguish the candlelight and preserve the candle used in dedicating your shrine as a memento of the occasion. Place the flower between the leaves of some Scriptural writings, the Bible, or other favorite book, for preservation. It will always have a magnetic, etheric connection with the shrine, and through your shrine with Astral Astara. Or you may wish to place it in a soft handkerchief or drawstring bag in order to carry it conveniently with you on journeys. It will serve as a constant contact with your home shrine and those whose blessing you have petitioned.

### PREPARING YOUR ESP LABORATORY AND CLASS ROOM

We have given instructions for establishing a personal shrine and altar. Many Astarians have formed groups and classes the better to study the Degree teachings. Some have asked help in preparing the proper ESP laboratory and class room. (The same room may be used as is used for a Shrine Room.) The following instructions will pertain to establishing the ESP class room.

Just what will you need when you wish to have a group gather for practicing ESP experiments?

For your meeting, select a room whose size, whenever possible, is in proportion to the number of people who are to be present. A room that is so large that the accumulated energies are scattered is as poor as a room so small that you are crowded and uncomfortable.



The room should be attractively furnished. It need not be elaborate or costly but it should reflect your spiritual thoughts and noble desires concerning the phenomena you hope to produce.

This and other suggestions may not be important in themselves when separated from the rest. In other words, extrasensory manifestations can occur even though these conditions are not complied with perfectly or even if one of them is violated. But manifestations generally will be improved if these suggestions are followed. If none of them is followed the manifestations may be poor if, indeed, there are any.

The basic furnishings would include a small table or stand to be placed in the center of the room, and preferably straight-backed but comfortable chairs. They should be placed in a circle or semi-circle around the room in order to concentrate the group and energies which it is to furnish. From this minimum you can increase the furnishings as you desire, or as your finances dictate. Floor coverings, draperies, inspirational pictures and other items all should contribute to the pleasing atmosphere, for we can be considerably more at ease and mentally and emotionally relaxed when our surroundings are harmonious.

If you wish to choose colors other than those already listed, then follow a color scheme which will contribute to mental upliftment and will not be an irritant to the mind. For example, do not put red "cast-off" draperies at one window and green "cast-off" draperies at another. Choose colors which appeal to you, but "loud" colors have no place in your spiritual sanctuary. They need not be dull and lifeless (never use black) but neither should they be garish in design.

Some people will want to burn incense prior to their class time, others will not. If the fragrance of incense contributes to your spiritual state of mind, then by all means use it. If the symbology of incense has a meaning to you, then use it. But if it is offensive to you, or any member of the group, avoid it for it will be only a hindrance.

Many like to have flowers in the room. It cannot be denied that they contribute to the pleasing atmosphere. If you cannot grow your own...and they may be too expensive to have regularly...then provide them only on special occasions. Extremely life-like artificial flowers are available, and a judicious selection and arrangement of them can be very inspiring.



Some people feel that live flowers make a greater contribution to the results sought because of the radiation of a certain spiritual essence which the artificial flowers cannot, of course, furnish. This is very true -- but artificial flowers are better than none at all, and even if you cannot have any flowers, do not despair, for they are not essential.

Temperature and air circulation are important considerations in your ESP laboratory. At least part of the time during your experiments you may want your room to be light-tight so that no light from the outside can penetrate it. Unfortunately, when you make a room light-tight, you almost always make it practically air-tight. Too many persons in too small a room that is also air-tight can be very uncomfortable as well as unhealthful. Such conditions do not contribute to mental alertness or spiritual thinking.

It is possible to purchase, quite inexpensively, a photographer's darkroom air-changer. It is electrically operated, and will keep fresh air circulating in the closed room and simultaneously prevent light. Those of you who cannot purchase such an instrument will have to limit the number of persons present and the time allotted to the experiment.

In temperatures, rules of good health should be followed. Many times we make the mistake of having the room at a comfortable temperature when only one person is present. Then when others arrive and the room is closed, the temperature begins to zoom. Even though the circulation of fresh air will help, if it is too warm everyone becomes drowsy. It is far better that the room be a little too cool than a little too warm. It is impossible to please everyone concerning temperature, but those who are too cool can put on wraps.

It is a good plan to have a container of water in the room. The water in a bowl of live flowers is sufficient, but if there are no flowers, there should be a bowl or glass of water. The reason for this is that there is a radiation of energy from water, which is an aid in the production of ESP phenomena.

You will remember that from the time of his baptism and the wondrous spiritual manifestation which occurred then, many of the miracles Jesus performed throughout his entire ministry took place when water was present. In addition to the baptismal manifestations, such psychic incidents as walking on the water, reading for the woman at the well, the healing at the



pool, and changing the water to wine occurred near, or with water. So let there be a container of water present in your ESP laboratory.

The light of the room should be indirect, if possible. If not, or even if it is, you should be able to have your choice of either bright lighting or dim.

In my (Robert's) meditations, years ago, I alternated every other evening with a very dim red light, and a very dim blue one. Rheostats for dimming all the lights in a room are expensive. Homemade rheostats are not always safe and have been known to cause fires. Do not put cloth or paper over electric bulbs to dim them. This dangerous practice can easily cause fire.

An inexpensive pull-chain regulator socket for one light can be purchased at most any hardware store, and is an excellent method of regulating the intensity of light desired for your experiments which require dimmed lights. Simply pulling one or the other of the two chains in the socket dims or brightens the light.

Thus the first preparations for your ESP research should be concerned mainly with the room in which your experiments are to take place...the dimensions, furnishings, cleanliness, attractiveness, temperature, condition of the air, lighting, and presence of water.

#### SELECTING THE GROUP FOR YOUR ESP EXPERIMENTS

Much of ESP practice is accomplished alone or perhaps with one other person. But from time to time, either regularly or only occasionally, you may gather with small groups of friends in the hope and expectation of gaining knowledge by group experiments. It is to the group preparation, as distinguished from that of environment, that we now turn. Then we shall proceed to the individual, personal preparation.

The first consideration concerning the group is its personnel. This cannot be too strongly stressed. Among the members of the group there should be harmony that is considerably more than just superficial. First, there should be personality harmony. Negative personality characteristics should not be expressed against the group or any of its individual members.

Should such feelings arise, the group should be disbanded, at least insofar as ESP experiments are concerned, and a more harmonious group assembled later.



A second category in which harmony is an essential is harmony of purpose. If some members of the group are interested only in unfolding clairvoyance, others interested only in dice experiments, others only in experiments with cards, and others only in philosophical studies, and so on, results will not be nearly as profitable as they might. (Some Astarian groups have been formed for the sole purpose of studying the Degree Lessons, but we are now discussing establishing an ESP laboratory.)

Probably it will be impossible to assemble a group among whose members every interest is the same. So each member will be required to make certain adjustments to goals and aims of the group as a whole. This can be accomplished unless the interests of individuals be so far apart there can be no meeting of minds. In such a case there should be a happy division so that each can find another group which shares his goals.

Another type of harmony is that of joyfully sharing the happiness of attainment by other members. Envy of unfoldment that comes to another will not retard his further progression, but it will retard progression of the one who bears jealousy or ill will in his heart. Astarians are well enough acquainted with the results of negative emotions not to require further discussion on this point.

#### HOW TO CREATE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS

Our next concern is to adopt a procedure for our ESP sessions. If it is for a group sitting it should be one which is agreeable to all its members. If you are experimenting "solo" you may wish to follow a different procedure than when experimenting with your friends, but that is a matter of individual preference.

As far as possible, the group should follow the same procedure every time. The reason for this is to create as nearly as possible exactly the same conditions for every meeting. This is important to our attitude of mind, and ability to supply the proper energies. Although a procedure for ESP sessions is beneficial, circumstances may require that some changes be made in it. You may wish to add to, but try not to take away from the basic ideas suggested.

*Begin your meetings with a prayer.* If you are sitting alone, you may wish to change the content of your prayer according to the inspiration of the moment. A



group should adopt a prayer to be spoken aloud in unison, such as the Lord's Prayer or Twenty-Third Psalm. There are several reasons for using a prayer to open ESP experimental sessions. In the first place, you are seeking an expression of divine power, and a prayer is an appropriate beginning for such an undertaking. And voicing a prayer creates serenity and lifts you to a more inspired state of mind.

Speaking a prayer serves still other purposes. It unites the thought processes of every member of the group. You will remember that the Bible describes the apostles as being "all with one accord in one place" on the day of Pentecost, at which time there were numerous psychic manifestations. (See Acts 2:1-4.)

The process of being "with one accord" was very important to the psychic results which they obtained. Having the thoughts of a group united is an invaluable aid in seeking a common goal and attaining a common, high level of thought and purpose. One of the finest methods for guiding our minds, controlling them in unison, for putting a group in "one accord," is by speaking a prayer together.

In your procedure, or you might call it liturgy, *you may wish to follow the prayer by singing a hymn.* A hymn simply carries still further the same essentials of the prayer. It helps lift the minds of those present to a higher spiritual level, and causes breathing in unison as well as mental accord. Therefore, you will wish to use care in selection of your hymn so that the thought it expresses is the proper one for your meeting. (Astara's meditation records may also be used, if you wish, either before or during the meeting.)

After the prayer and hymn, you may wish to include in your liturgy *a few moments devoted to a breathing exercise.* The use of Lama Yoga is suggested if all members of your group are Astarians. During the breathing exercise you should feel you are indrawing power from the cosmic just as an air plant draws its entire life force from the atmosphere.

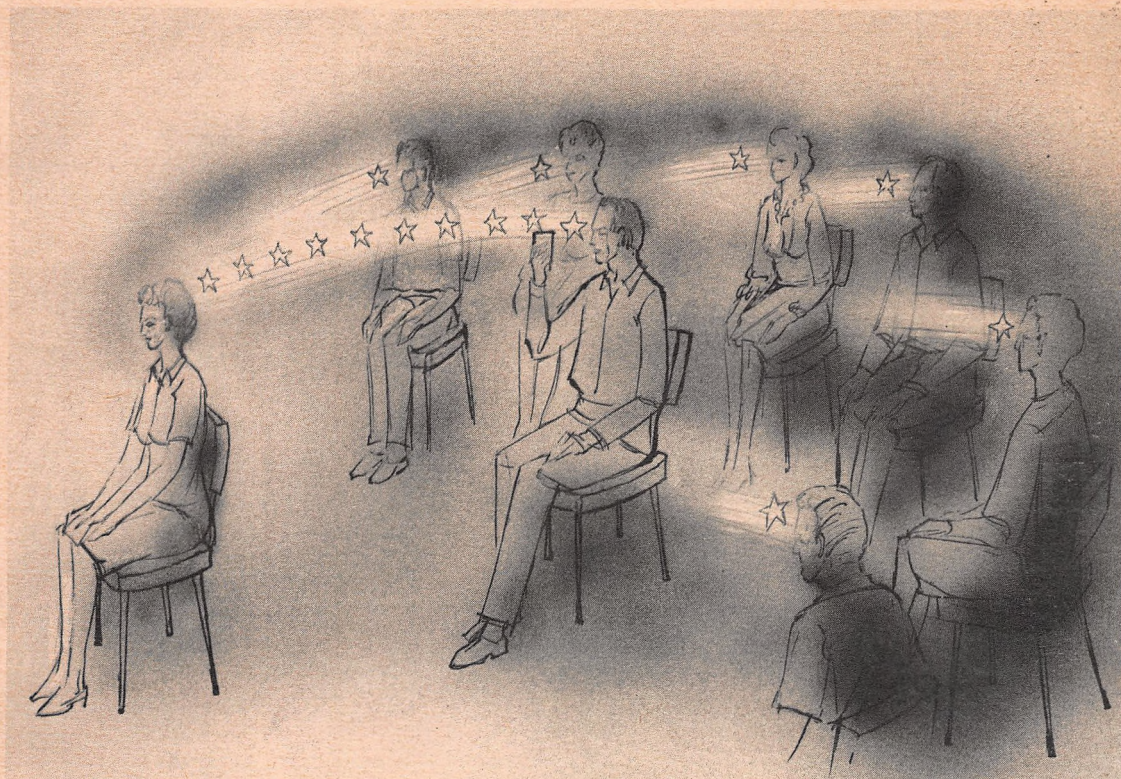
#### INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION

The first category is *mental and emotional* preparation. Emotionally we should be calm. Even though we may have been upset over something we should put it from our minds by substituting spiritual thoughts to acquire emotional stability.



The desire for our goal, which is to prove the power of man's mind, should be uppermost -- but not to such a degree of intensity that we will be bitterly disappointed if our attempts fail.

We should adopt a rather indifferent attitude, in a sense, for if we are to succeed in experiments in psychometry, clairvoyance, clairauidience, intuition,



visualization, telepathy, thought projection and reception, we must be mentally serene.

The next category in individual preparations concerns *the physical*. You may be surprised to learn that there are physical considerations. Do not eat a heavy meal just prior to attending an ESP session. It is necessary that you be mentally alert, and this you can not be if your digestive tract and glands are occupied in digesting a heavy meal. If you must eat before the meeting, eat lightly. Some may even want to fast. Whatever you do, use good judgment. Do not fast to the point of actual weakness.

*Clothing* is another item to consider. To generalize, it should be comfortable. Shoes, underclothing, neckties, and other articles of wearing apparel that are tight to the point of discomfort are a hindrance, particularly to our mental experiments. Noisy jewelry,



such as women's bracelets, can be an annoyance and distraction, and should be removed during the session.

Thus the preparation for your ESP experiments include (1) the room in which the experiments are to occur, (2) the members of the group itself, (3) the attitudes of the members, (4) the procedure to be followed, and (5) individual preparation. Attention to these details will improve the results of your adventures in ESP.

### CONCLUSION

This treatise is not intended to offer a rigid set of rules and practices which you must follow. Spiritual unfoldment, and the methods and procedures used to attain it, are an individual and very personal matter. Therefore consider the ideas herein as suggestions only, to be used and adapted by you according to your personal affinities and desires.

The important point is that you make an effort to open the channels of spiritual influence in your life, that you activate and make functional your connection with life's superior dimensions, that you utilize some method of attunement with your own High Self and the Infinite Being, that you make a substantial and objective reality of the fact that you are in God and God is in you.

There is no organization in the world today that offers its members as many and varied methods of accomplishing these goals as does Astara. Its Degree Lessons and other teachings, its meditation recordings, its special treatises and methods of personal realization such as the *Book of Accomplishment*, are unparalled in the annals of spiritual aspiration.

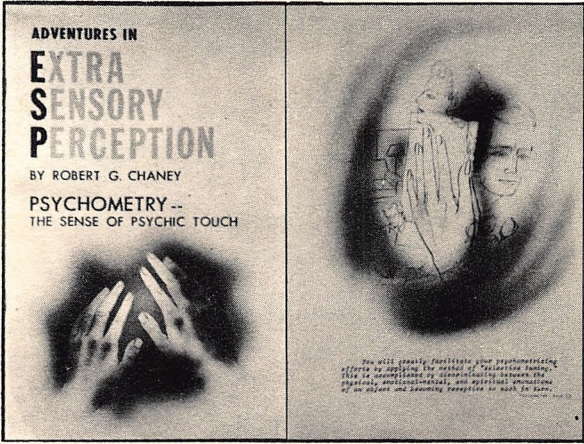
If you will use such of these aids to your spiritual progress as appeal to you, then your aspirations will become realities and your goals will be gained. And new and greater aspirations and goals will present themselves.





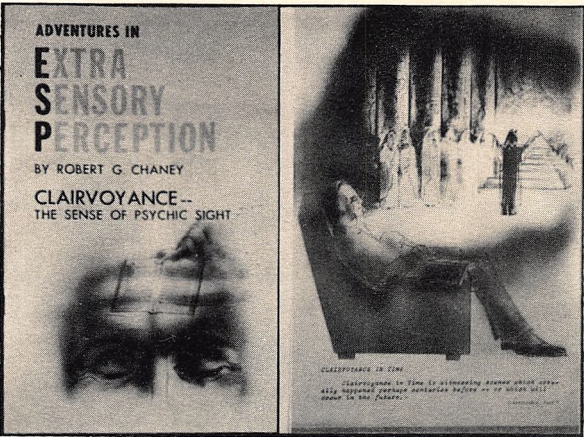
ADVENTURES IN ESP By Robert G. Chaney

PSYCHOMETRY -- THE SENSE OF PSYCHIC TOUCH



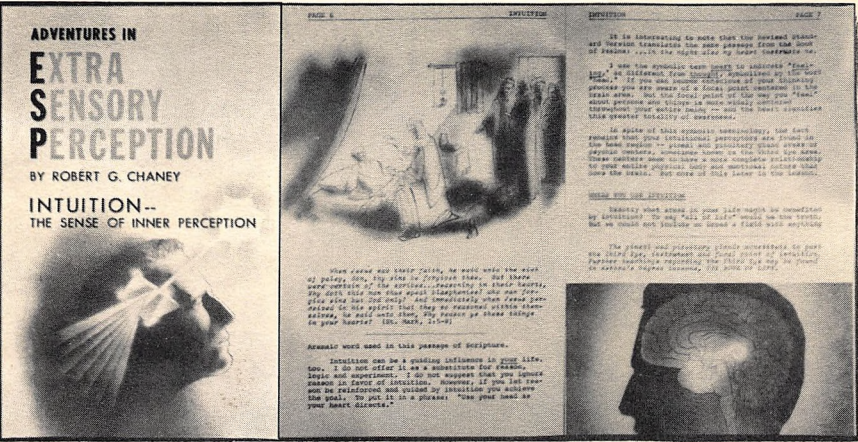
Psychometry is the faculty of tuning in to the qualities of an object and learning not only its history but perhaps even the "story" of its owner, past or present. Psychometry, the sense of psychic touch, enables one to bring his consciousness into attunement with the vibrational qualities inherent within the object itself, or those impinged upon it by the person to whom it belongs.

CLAIRVOYANCE -- THE SENSE OF PSYCHIC SIGHT



Clairvoyance, extrasensory aspect of sight, enables one to perceive persons, objects, events not in immediate range of awareness or vision. The persons might be miles away, even "dead," and events might be of the past, present or future. Other clairvoyant visions come directly from the High Self or Oversoul, as it attempts to communicate ideas to the waking conscious mind.

INTUITION -- THE SENSE OF INNER PERCEPTION



Intuition stems from the premise that you have an inner sense that by-passes the usual methods of gathering information. It reaches into the great sea of knowledge and grasps the central core of some

unknown fact. Have you ever had a "hunch?" Ever met a stranger and suddenly "known" many things about him without hearing him say a word? If you have, it was a spontaneous flash of intuition.

Tuition: \$1 per lesson



